

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CANBER 05525 220818Z

12

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 DRC-01 /091 W

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R 220742Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3942

INFO AMCONSUL SYDNEY

AMCONSUL MELBOURNE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE CANBERRA 5525

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, AS

SUBJ: SENSATIONAL NEWSPAPER REPORT OF PRIME MINISTER

WHITLAM'S INTENTION TO RESIGN DENIED

1. AFTERNOON DAILY, SYDNEY SUN (POSSIBLY MOST IRRESPONSIBLE PAPER IN AUSTRALIA) CARRIES REPORT AUG 22 THAT PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM INTENDS TO RESIGN SHORTLY OVER HIS INABILITY TO CONTROL LABOR PARLIAMENTARY CAUCUS AND CABINET. REPORT HAS BEEN DENIED BY ERIC WALSH, WHITLAM'S PRESS SECRETARY, BUT SOME VERSION OF THIS SO FAR UNFOUNDED REPORT MAY BE CARRIED IN U.S. PRESS, AND DEPT SHOULD BE AWARE IT IS HIGHLY SPECULATIVE AND HAS ALREADY BEEN OFFICIALLY DENIED.

2. THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT THAT WHITLAM IS UNDER HEAVY PRESSURE, RESULTING FROM DIFFERENCES WITHIN LABOR GOVERNMENT OVER PROPER POLICIES TO DEAL WITH INFLATION, UNEMPLOYMENT, AND BURGEONING STRIKES. RECENT REPORTS HAVE SUGGESTED WHITLAM HAS BEEN BEMUSED AND FATALISTIC ABOUT CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS, UNCERTAIN AS TO ACTION TO TAKE. MISSION IS COLLECTING AND ASSESSING AVAILABLE INFO ON GENERAL SITUATION AND WILL REPORT MORE FULLY IN NEXT DAY OR SO.

HARROP

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NNN

Message Attributes

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Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
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